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Indigenous issues

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Khalid **Alwafi** (Saudi Arabia)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2008, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled:

"Indigenous issues:

"(a) Indigenous issues;

"(b) Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People"

and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item at its 17th, 18th, 29th, 39th and 48th meetings, on 20, 21 and 28 October and 11 and 25 November 2008. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/63/SR.17, 18, 29, 39 and 48).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (A/63/166).

4. At the 17th meeting, on 20 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Director of the New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made introductory statements (see A/C.3/63/SR.17).

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the New York Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Acting Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs responded to a question and comment made by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (see A/C.3/63/SR.17).

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II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/63/L.17 and Rev.1

6. At the 29th meeting, on 28 October, the representative of Guatemala, on behalf of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Republic of Moldova and Timor-Leste introduced a draft resolution entitled "Indigenous issues" (A/C.3/63/L.17), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council related to indigenous issues,

"*Recalling also* that the General Assembly proclaimed, in its resolution 59/174 of 20 December 2004, the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

"*Bearing in mind* that the Assembly adopted, in its resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

"*Recalling* that in previous sessions of the General Assembly, constructive dialogues were held with the first Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples,

"1. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people to report on the implementation of his mandate to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session;

"2. *Also requests* that the Secretary-General undertake an evaluation of the objectives of the Second Decade with a view to reinforcing them and to ensuring fulfilment of the established goal of the Second Decade, and report to the General Assembly in 2010."

7. At its 39th meeting, on 11 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution (A/C.3/63/L.17/Rev.1), submitted by the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/63/L.17 and Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Barbados, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Suriname, the United States of America and Uruguay. Subsequently, Belize, Benin, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Dominica, Iraq, Madagascar, the Philippines and Slovenia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/63/L.17/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 10).

B. Draft decision proposed by the Chairman

9. At its 48th meeting, on 25 November, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (A/63/166) (see para. 11).

III. Recommendations of the Third Committee

10. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Indigenous issues

The General Assembly,

Recalling all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council relating to indigenous issues,

Recalling also that the General Assembly proclaimed, in its resolution 59/174 of 20 December 2004, the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Bearing in mind that the General Assembly adopted, by its resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

Recalling that, at previous sessions of the General Assembly, constructive dialogues were held with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people,

1. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people to report on the implementation of his mandate to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and mechanisms and other stakeholders, including indigenous organizations, to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a midterm assessment report that evaluates progress made in the achievement of the goal and objectives of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;

3. *Decides* to adjust the mandate of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations so as to facilitate the participation of representatives of indigenous peoples' organizations in the expert mechanism established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 6/36 of 14 December 2007.[1]

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/63/53), chap. I, sect. A.

11. The Third Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

The General Assembly takes note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.[1]

[1] A/63/166.